

*C. V. Henkle*

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# THE LAY-MAN'S MAGAZINE.

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"THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THY HEART, WITH ALL  
THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIND—AND THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF."

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## JOURNAL OF ABDOL MESSEE.

*Journal of a voyage up the Ganges  
from Calcutta to Agra, made by  
Abdool Messee, one of the Readers  
supported in India by the Church  
Missionary Society; written by  
one of the Chaplains of the Hon-  
orable East India Company*

(Continued from page 342.)

July 27.—To-day Abdool heard of and visited two persons, who have fallen under the displeasure of their friends from their attachment to the Gospel; one, the servant of a Hindoo Doctor, whom he had served for sixteen years, and who speaks very highly of his fidelity; the other a money-changer, who tells his mother plainly this world is only for a short time, and he is determined at all risks to secure a happy eternity.

July 30.—To-day Abdool's house in the city was a constant scene of comers and goers. The disciples of the various Durgahs (tombs of saints) came in different bodies, at one time upward of forty together, to inquire about the Hageem Sahib Messee, and to know the mode of initiation into Christianity. As might be expected some went away pleased, and some displeased.

Aug. 3.—Yesterday afternoon, and until late in the evening, Abdool's house in the city was full of visitors.

Four men from Jelapore, two days' journey, having heard of the good doctrine which he taught, and of his attention to the poor, came to see whether the report was true.

At one time, a great company of the learned men of the city, many of whom Abdool had not seen before, came, and asked about many curious points in their own observances. After two or three of these questions, Abdool said, he could not see their drift in making such inquiries: they knew he was become a Christian: and though, from having learned these things in his youth, he still remembered them, yet he now had nothing to do with them. It then appeared that there had been a dispute among themselves respecting him, and that they had taken this method to decide it. One party said he had been a Jew, and so turned Christian: another said no, for they knew his relatives and connections. It was then objected, that, though he might have been a Musselman, yet he must have been unlearned in their religion. On knowing this, Abdool gave them proof of his knowledge in their customs, and they went away satisfied that he had not without understanding become a Christian. Three of them asked for and received translations.

The supply of the Epistle to the Romans is arrived very opportunely, as the doctrine of Justification is now very much discussed. From reading St. Matthew, many are persuaded of the excellency of the Gospel, and now the question among them is, *How shall man be just with God?*

Aug. 13.—To-day Abdool's brother arrived from Lucknow. The family have written many letters to Abdool, none of which have been forwarded; and a letter which Abdool had written to them was opened by the Nabob



of Lucknow's people, and afterward shewn about. The copies of St. Matthew, which Abdool's father took away from Cawnpore, have been all sought after, and read even by some of the principal ladies of the Nabob's palace. At first, the brother reports, the people reproached them, on their return from visiting us at Cawnpore; but now no one molests them: on the contrary, many speak well of the Gospel, and express a wish to see and hear Abdool, that they may know more of these things.

Aug. 19.—A Sheykh from the city came to declare his intention of embracing Christianity. Some others, who are learned men, have declared the same; and wish to come daily to read the Scriptures, and hear them explained.

There are now fifteen Catechumens, among them a Hindoo Byragee, who has been lying twelve years in a jungle at Joypoor, waiting for his God to appear to him: at length being wearied out and hearing of the (former) Jogi's conversion, he came over to us and, gives good evidence of sincerity.

The newly baptized have been employed in the cultivation of land, which we hired for the purpose of proving their disposition; and all who have joined themselves to us, are set to one kind of labour or another.

The place of worship in the city could not contain one third of the people who attended on Sunday, tho' the Kazeer had forbidden all true Mahometans to attend. We are about to erect a place for the better accommodation of those who wish to hear the Gospel.

From Monday several Molwees from the city began to attend every afternoon, to read and hear the Scriptures explained in order. There has been generally five every day, beside those connected with us.

The Hugeem improves daily. At first the Mahometans tried to pre-ju-

dice us against him, by a variety of stories; none of which however, affected his sincerity: and now he is, in the sight of all, devoted to the Gospel. They begin to revile him, and also all the Molwees who come to read the Scriptures. The Hugeem has begun to learn Hebrew; and from his acquaintance with Arabic, is likely to make good progress, and will be a great acquisition in correcting the Hindoostanee Translation of the Old Testament, left by Mr. Martyn unfinished.

The nephew of Abdool, baptized July 25, is employed as a Reader, and has greatly improved since his baptism. In consequence of the scarcity in the Mahratta States, and the increased number of poor who flock to this place, a subscription was set on foot by the Judge, and a daily distribution of about thirty rupees is made through Abdool to upward of six hundred poor.

Jan. 3.—Sunday—Our boat staid at Ribbon Gunge. In the afternoon, Abdool went into the Bazar and preached. At first, the people shewed no attention; but gradually one and another stood, till a crowd collected, and more attention seemed excited than at any place before. After he had finished his discourse, the people gathered round him, and asked many questions about the names which he had mentioned. Three came down to his boat with him, and passed a good deal of the evening in conversation; writing down from his lips what he told them in brief of Christian Truth.

Jan. 7.—At Baxar, early in the morning walked with Abdool toward the European Barack. On drawing near, some of the Native Wives of the Soldiers recognized me, and several came out and expressed their gladness to see me, and said they should be happy to have public worship. These had been of my congregation at Chunar. Abdool expressed



great satisfaction, and observed that this was the first time he had seen Native Christians desire Divine Service. About ten, we had Public Worship with the Europeans, the Commanding Officer attending. About twenty Native Christians, mostly women assembled in another place with Abdool: after reading prayers, he was led to discourse long on subjects which occurred at that time, and says he never felt his heart so drawn out during any exercise as here. Several also of the congregation were affected even to tears.

Jan. 19—Sunday.—Rested at Gha-zeepore. In the afternoon, Abdool walked into the Native Town. Met with the chief land-owner in the place and neighbourhood; a man of wealth and of great good nature, and much esteemed among his own people as a holy man. After some conversation he invited Abdool to his house, where about a hundred people were assembled, before whom much discussion took place about religion. The above person shewed more disposition to attend than any of them; and begged to have two copies of St. Matthew, and two of Persian, and that all the translations should be sent him from time to time.

After this, Abdool went into the Bazar, where the shops were shut up in order to celebrate the Mohurram, and many Musselmen were collected. At first, Abdool doubted whether he should address them at such a season; but one of the people, who had seen him and heard him at the Native Gentleman's house, coming, brought on a conversation and asked him to say what he had to say before them all. He then began a hymn; and, after that, taking the sermon, 'Christ our Benefactor,' which he has translated, as the ground of his discourse, he began. Often he was interrupted by questions, and had many objections to discuss, which he did with great force from the Books of Moses. One

said, 'I see we must read the Law and the Gospel for ourselves.' On his addressing them on that part, 'Have you not need for his forgiveness?' and making a pause, one, thinking he spoke to him, cried out of the crowd, 'I don't choose to answer you. It is enough for me to confess there is no God but God, and Mahomet is the Prophet of God.'

The crowd became so great, that all passage was stopped. A procession of Musselmen came up after the manner of the Mohurram. Abdool cried out, 'Make way: let them pass, and do not fancy that I wish to excite disturbance or to break the peace.' One called to him, 'Go on with your discourse; never mind these poor ignorant creatures:' and no one made way. On which many of the processioners exclaimed repeatedly, 'A curse upon the Christians!' Abdool cried with a loud voice, 'Mercy upon you! May God pity you and change you! I was once as you are, and it is from ignorance that ye curse this good way.' They then stood still to listen; and after a long while he left off, and was followed by the crowd; many pressing to inquire further, and many expressing contempt: so that there was likely to be contention among themselves.

At no place in our way has there been so much attention excited as here.

Among the questions asked, one was when he repeated, *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved.* One asked aloud, 'What is the meaning of being baptized?' Abdool answered by relating the questions that were put to him at his baptism, and explained the pouring of water upon him in token of his being separated unto God. 'But,' said the inquirer, 'did they not give you a piece of bread and pork? for that I have been told is also done when a Mussulman becomes Christian.' This



Abdool denied : but told them that he had no objection to pork.

An old man said, 'I pray you satisfy me on two points, which I dislike greatly in the English : Why do they not cut the throat of the animals which they eat ? and, why do they not use ablutions ?'—'As to the first,' said Abdool, 'you yourselves eat fish without cutting their throat, and true religion is quite distinct from meat and drink. And as to cleanliness, you see how particular the English are in their dress and in their table, so as none among you can pretend to be : and, in respect of washings in religion, they are taught to make clean the heart.' 'What, then,' said the old man, 'are you all saints ?'—'No, alas !' said Abdool, 'far from it ! As to myself, I was as sinful as any of you may be, and still Satan raises evil passions in my heart ; and I am every day a sinner before God ; but there is this difference ; that now, by faith in Jesus Christ, I am saved ; and, by the water of baptism, I have been set apart to holiness, and now strive against sin, whilst ye are still in your former sins.'

Jan. 22.—At Mirzapore, a young man came on board, who said he had followed from Chunar on purpose to hear more from Abdool, and to beg a copy of the Translation. He is the son of a Zemindar, and appeared serious, and full of inquiries. He said he knew, that, in the latter days, all shall become of one religion ; and he supposed the time to be at hand.

Above Mirzapore is a Hindoo Temple, where multitudes of sheep and goats are daily offered in sacrifice before an idol. The custom is, to cut off the head of an animal at a stroke with a sword, to present the blood with some money to the idol, and to carry the carcase home to eat. Abdool went on shore, and tried to call the attention of the crowd that was coming and going. He began with telling the Bramins, who were in at-

tendance, the origin and meaning of sacrifices ; and called to the people to listen. The Bramins told him, if he was going to make an offering, to do so ; and if not, to go along : and assured the people that he was crazed. Finding he could gain no attention he went on.

Jan 23.—In the morning, we arrived at Allahabad.

The concourse of people assembled to celebrate the Annual Bathing Season was unusually great. Every one that bathes at the junction of the Ganges and Jumma, pays to Government a rupee : and, from a calculation made two days before the close of the festival it was expected that 250,000 rupees would be collected.—

Those who drown themselves pay an additional sum to Government. One poor wretch had drowned himself with the usual ceremonies before our arrival. Several more had signified their intention of doing so at the eclipse of the sun on February 1st ; and many, it was expected, as is annually the case, would, from the pressure of the crowd, be thrust beyond their depth, and perish in the waters. The sight of such a multitude, collected on so deplorable an occasion, could not but affect a feeling mind. And is not the *error of Balaam* chargeable on those, who, *possessing the vision of the Almighty*, love and receive the *wages of such superstitious iniquity* ?

Many Mussulmen came to see the fair, as it really appears to be. Among these is the widow of the late Nabob of Lucknow, Asufoldowlah ; and, with her, many of the ancient Mahometan Nobility. To these Abdool was, as it appeared, well known, his uncle having been private tutor to that Prince. The godly sincerity of Abdool was here made manifest ; as he had never spoken of his connections ; evidently now considering it as immaterial 'to whom related or by whom begot :' while the unconverted Hindoo places all his superiority in



these things ; and if really lowly-born. will try to pass himself off as *some great one*, if he can.

Abdool had resided here two years, a long time ago ; and, without knowing of the arrival of his Lucknow acquaintances, went into the town to call upon some of his former friends. On going from the river into the road he was met by Coojah Badshah Khan, son of the late Ghoozi Oldeen Khan, who, from being Prime Minister to Shah Allum, withdrew to Culpée for religious retirement, and died there about six or eight years ago.—

The Nobleman ordered his servants to stop ; and, calling after Abdool, inquired if he were not such an one.

*Abdool* : ‘ I perceive your honour remembers me ; I need not, therefore, affirm that I am.’ On this the Khan exclaimed ; ‘ The Lord preserve me ! I have often heard of Satan, but never saw him till now ! What fair appearance have you put on to deceive people ?’—*Abd.* ‘ Pray, sir, have I been disrespectful in your presence, or stolen any thing, or injured you in any way, that you should call me by such a name ?’—The Khan, somewhat softened, said, ‘ No, no ! but I hear that you are turned Infidel. What made you embrace Christianity ?’—

*Abd.* ‘ What your Honour heard is true ; and I beg to declare before you, that I am indeed a Christian. I beg you will not think of me as such an one, (naming a person) who halted between the Sheahs and Soonnis, (the two principal Mahometan Sects) so that both stood in doubt of him. I would not you should doubt of me. I am indeed and from my heart a Christian.’—*Khan* : ‘ What disrespect is this, to confess your Infidelity even in my presence !’—*Abd.* ‘ Sir, do not consider it disrespect to yourself ; but, for the Truth’s sake I say it, and cannot say otherwise.’—*Khan* : ‘ Since you are become a Feringee, why do you not cut off your beard, and dress as the English ?’—*Abd.* ‘ Sir you err

in calling me Feringee. That is the historical name for an European ; and I, a native of Hindostan, can never become an European. But call me, as I am, a Christian : prove to me my error ; and do not think that true religion consists in a name or in dress.’ After much conversation to this effect they separated.

On going into the town, Abdool went to the house of one who had been very licentious, even for a Mahometan, but has reformed. Here, after much argument, the master of the house declared that he considered Abdool so corrupted, that he must have the very carpet he sat upon washed to purify it!—*Abd.* ‘ If you speak in respect to my personal character, I acknowledge myself so sinful that you may well think your carpet defiled by my touch ; but, if you speak in respect of the Faith which I have embraced, you ought to consider your carpet purified !’

Going next into the house of a person who formerly held a commission in our Native Cavalry, who is retired here upon the Government Pension, he made himself known ; and, on being recognized, the old officer sent for all his friends to come and see him, of whom they had heard so much of late ; at length, a large crowd collected : in the mean time, the man was biting his lips with vexation ; and telling Abdool how many evil things he had heard of him.—*Abd.* ‘ I am aware that many things of this sort are said of me ; and, hearing of you as having become religious, I therefore now called, hoping that you will hear the truth from myself, and not be led away by false reports.’—‘ It is true,’ said the old man, ‘ I am become religious. I hate the Infidels, (that is, the British) and mean to throw up the pension, and have no more to do with them.’—*Abd.* ‘ Look there now ; had you served the Mah-rattas, and lost an arm or a leg in battle, would they have given you a



pension? And consider how many servants of the Nabob, yea, some who have been servants to his father and grandfather, are turned off in their old age without provision; and these, whom you call infidels, have given you a handsome subsistence, and you pass your old age in ease! Consider your words, and say who is the Infidel.—‘Well, well,’ said he ‘but I can never be of their religion: they are so unclean, eating all kinds of food, and never using ablutions.’ Abd. ‘But who forbids them to bathe? There is nothing said in the Gospel on these subjects; and since you place so much holiness in these things, had you not better strip yourself to a cloth round your middle, and go bathe at the junction of the rivers among the Hindoos? They fancy that great holiness!’

In going to the house of a merchant, Abdool passed by a Mosque where they were beginning prayers. He went to the door; but did not go in, lest they should raise a complaint against him for defiling their place. The Reader began: ‘O God, enlighten our hearts with the light of faith!’ Abdool said aloud, ‘Amen!’ The Reader looked around with astonishment; and, after observing, began again the same sentence; to which Abdool again repeated aloud, ‘Amen!’ The Reader proceeded, and Abdool was silent the rest of the service—When it was ended, some of them came round him, and inquired: ‘You said Amen to the first sentence, but to no other: why was this?’—Abd. ‘Because the first sentence was right, and was the prayer of holy men of old; but the latter part is an invention of late date.’—Query: ‘How do you make that appear?’—Abd. ‘You add the name of Abubeekar to that of Mahomet; so that, by your own confession, that is added since Mahomet’s time.’ Some of them now suspected, and inquired if he were not such an one. This led to an under-

standing; and a long dispute, in which he explained to them many of our customs in worship, and made appeals to their conscience. One asked, if he were not affected by the contempt of his former friends, and wondered he could be so hardened as thus openly to contend for Christianity.—

Abd. ‘I am, indeed, affected; and my heart by no means approves of your opposition: and you know, that at Lucknow, had such things been said to me, how I should have resisted; but now I am withheld. I am no longer in my own keeping, but in the power of another.’ These asked who that might be. He answered, ‘I am restrained, and enabled to bear your reproach, by the power of the Holy Spirit.’ They were silent.

He went last to the old merchant, who has a house at Delhi, where he formerly resided, and with some of whose children Abdool was educated. He treated Abdool with more affection than any of the others; and was much moved by his exhortations to seek salvation from Christ *at the eleventh hour*. He, and two others of the whole crowd assembled, took a copy of St. Matthew’s Gospel.—Many might have been given away; but, where no disposition appeared to read them, it was thought best not to give them.

In one company, Abdool had occasion to mention his having been baptized by Mr. Brown. Some one inquired, ‘where is Mr. Brown now?’ Abd. ‘He is where he has long intended to go. He is no longer in this world.’ They said, ‘That is very well! May you soon go after him, and no longer make this ado about your religion!’—Abd. ‘I do, indeed, desire to be where Mr. Brown is, and care not how soon I may be taken: but think not that this religion depends on Mr. Brown, or on me; for, if I were taken away, God can raise up one from among your own selves to supply my place.’



The above is a very abridged account of what passed on that day.— In the evening, Abdool was quite exhausted: and for two days after, appeared much cast down: but on reading the account of the opposition which Jeremiah met with, he seemed much encouraged; and commented, with great feeling, on the impatience which the Prophet discovered, saying, that he had to-day found his own history: adding, 'How truly is this the word of God! From David, all the Prophets agree with the Gospel, in writing the heart *deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.*'

*To be continued.*

## VISIT TO AN IDOL TEMPLE,

*About Ten Miles from Vizapatam.*

Feb. 1812.—The brethren Lee Gordon, and Pritchett, went to Samaachalem, a place of high repute among the natives on account of a famous pagoda, erected to Narashimwahawamy and Shimvahaadreappodoo.— 'The idol is a stone Pig, which we were not allowed to see. We ascended the hill by a flight of stone steps, partly natural and partly artificial, in number 1009. On the sides and top of these steps are several lesser pagodas. The great pagoda is near the summit of the hill; and appears to be nearly as large as Westminster Abbey. The roof, which is flat, is supported from within by a number of prodigious pillars; and the whole covered with carved images of ridiculous forms. At the entrance of the front door, on the pillars which support the veranda, is an inscription in Gentoo characters, which the Bramins themselves pretend they cannot read. On our arrival the doors were closed. A number of Bramins who were within, feasting on the offering, made a great noise; but one of them

told us it was their god who was eating. We conversed with the people without, who expressed their superstitious attachment to the place and its worship. Towards noon the doors were opened, and a crowd of people came out. This gave us an opportunity of conversing with some of the principal Bramins, on the difference between their gods (whom we said might easily be destroyed by men) and our God, who made the heavens and the earth. We asked one, who appeared to be more intelligent and zealous than the rest, if he had ever committed sin. He answered, no.— We then asked him where he would go after death. He replied, 'To the same place where you will go.' One of the brethren said, 'if I am wicked, I shall go to hell, and so will you.'— He replied 'There is no hell.' One observed to him, 'Your gods have no power to do good or evil. No one therefore, ought to fear or worship them; and that the true God would punish them if they persisted in their idolatry.' He was asked whether the Bramins ever commit any bad actions,—whether they ever tell a lie, or attempt to deceive. He answered, No. He was then asked why they had just told us that their god was eating, when they knew it was false. At this he was somewhat confounded; and said they were allowed to do so; and it was their custom in order to get money. During this conversation another Bramin came, and ordered the people to leave the place.— Another, addressing himself to one of us, said, 'If you thus speak against our god and this place, he will appear to you to-night, and tell you of it, and command you not to offend again in like manner.' One of the brethren replied, 'I do not fear your god; but if he should come, as you say, I engage to make a present to you, and worship your god in this place; but if he should not, will you consent to give me your idol, and worship it no



longer? To which he answered in the negative.

'We hope our day was not mis-spent, but that some good may arise from this visit. Before we reached home at night, the report of our conversation had spread abroad, and was much talked of among the natives.—When we have acquired the language more perfectly, it will be very desirable to go thither again.'

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**A NIGHT IN A STAGE COACH.**  
*Being a meditation on the way between London and Bristol.*

BY JAMES MONTGOMERY, ESQ.

I travel all the long, long night,  
 By ways to me unknown;  
 I travel, like a bird in flight,  
 Onward, and all alone.

In vain I close my weary eyes,  
 They will not, cannot sleep;  
 But like the watchers of the skies  
 Their twinkling vigils keep.

My thoughts are wand'ring wide and far;  
 From earth to heaven they dart;  
 Now wing their flight from star to star,  
 Now dive into my heart.

Backward they roll the tide of time,  
 And live through vanish'd years,  
 Or hold their "colloquy sublime"  
 With future hopes and fears.

Then passing joys and present woes  
 Chase through my troubled mind;  
 Repose still seeknig—but repose  
 Not for a moment find.

So yonder lone and lovely moon  
 Gleams on the clouds gone by,  
 Illumines those around her noon,  
 Yet westward points her eye.

Nor wind nor flood her course delay,  
 Forward I see her glide;  
 She never pauses on her way,  
 She never turns aside.

With anxious heart and throbbing brain,  
 Strength, patience, spirits gone,  
 Pulses of fire in every vein,  
 Thus, thus I journey on.

But soft!—in Nature's failing hour,  
 Up springs a breeze—I feel  
 Its balmy breath, its cordial power,  
 Its power to soothe and heal.

Lo! grey, and gold, and crimson streaks,  
 The gorgeous east adorn,  
 While o'er th' empurpled mountains breaks  
 The glory of the morn.

Insensibly the stars retire,  
 Exhaled like drops of dew:  
 Now through an arch of living fire,  
 The Sun comes forth to view.

The hills, the vales, the waters burn  
 With his enkindling rays;  
 No sooner touch'd, than they return  
 A tributary blaze!

His quick'ning light to me descends,  
 His cheering warmth I own;  
 Upward to him my spirit tends,  
 But worships God alone.

O that on me, with beams benign,  
 His countenance would turn,  
 I too should then arise and shine,  
 Arise, and shine, and burn.

Slowly I raise my languid head,  
 Pain and soul-sickness cease;  
 The phantoms of dismay are fled,  
 And health returns, and peace.

Where is the beauty of the scene,  
 Which silent night display'd?  
 The clouds, the stars, the blue serene,  
 The moving light and shade?

All gone!—the moon erewhile so bright,  
 Veil'd in a dusky shroud,  
 Seems, in the sun's overpowering light,  
 The fragment of a cloud.

At length I reached my journey's end:  
 Welcome that well known face!  
 I meet a Brother and a Friend,  
 I find a resting place.

Just such a pilgrimage is life;  
 Hurried from stage to stage,  
 Our wishes with our lot at strife,  
 Through childhood to old age.

The world is seldom what it seems:—  
 To Man, who dimly sees,  
 Realities appear as dreams,  
 And dreams realities.

The Christian's years, tho' slow their flight,  
 When he is call'd away,  
 Are but the watches of a night,  
 And death the dawn of day.

He sees o'er his expiring eyes,  
 While forth his spirit springs,  
 The Sun of Righteousness arise  
 With healing in his wings.

When I shall reach ~~my~~ journey's end,  
 O may I find, through grace,  
 In CHRIST a Brother and a friend,  
 In Heaven a resting place.